



Sanitation Collection Service Change Program Frequently Asked Questions

The DeKalb County Sanitation Division is containerizing garbage and consolidating its collection schedules to improve service delivery and efficiencies, as well as to simplify scheduling. Effective July 6, 2015, all garbage, recyclable materials and yard trimmings will be collected on the same day, one day per week for all single-family residential households in unincorporated DeKalb and the cities of Brookhaven, Dunwoody and Lithonia receiving sanitation collection services from the County's Sanitation Division. For more information on this sanitation collection service change program, please contact the Sanitation Division's customer service team at 404-294-2900 or sanitation@dekalbcountyga.gov, or visit www.rollingforwardtoone.com.

Key features of the one-day-a-week sanitation collection service change program

- **Residential customers will not experience a fee increase.** Improved efficiencies will reduce our costs to provide service, allowing us to keep sanitation fees at the same level they have been since 2006.
- **Standardized containers.** The standardized use of green 65-gallon county-provided garbage containers will ensure neighborhoods are cleaner and neater with the reduction of loose trash.
- **One-day-a-week garbage pickup.** Currently, garbage collection occurs twice a week for DeKalb County residents. On the first collection day, the Sanitation Division collects more than 66 percent of countywide garbage. This leaves a much lighter second-day collection.
- **Consolidated collection.** With consolidated collection, solid waste, recyclable materials and yard trimmings will be collected on the same day.
- **Additional benefits to county residents.** The program will include a renewed focus on recycling education for county residents, and additional roadside litter collection by Sanitation Division employees.

When will the one-day-a-week collection service change take effect?

The "go live" dates (**effective dates for one-day-a-week collection service**) are July 6, 2015 for customers who will have Monday as their new collection day, July 7, 2015 for customers who will have Tuesday as their new collection day, July 8, 2015 for customers who will have Wednesday as their new collection day, and July 9, 2015 for customers who will have Thursday as their new collection day. This one-day-a-week collection service will begin on July 6, 2015, even for customers who have not received a roll cart. These customers will be allowed to continue using their own garbage containers until they receive their county-provided roll cart. All roll cart deliveries should be completed by the end of August. Additionally, when roll carts are delivered, residents will receive a revised 2015/2016 sanitation holiday collection schedule, a sanitation collection procedures brochure, a brochure advising on roll cart use and a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document.



How will residents be notified of the various timelines for the program?

Door hangers with residents' new collection service day will be delivered beginning May 29, 2015. This project will take approximately three to four weeks. Residents will also receive direct mail correspondence/letter about the various program timelines. Letters will be mailed during the first few weeks in June. When roll carts are delivered, residents will also receive a reminder of what their new collection service day will be. Various communications channels, including but not limited to, newspaper ads, public service announcements (PSAs), DeKalb County Television (DCTV) promotions, media promotions, homeowners and community association newsletters and email blasts, social media, press releases, etc. will be used to disseminate information on the program.

What will be the focus during Phase I of the program?

One-day-a-week sanitation collection service will begin on July 6, 2015. Phase I will consist of the delivery of green 65-gallon garbage roll carts to each single-family residential household, green 35- or 45-gallon garbage roll carts, as they become available, to condominium and townhome customers, and the full implementation of one-day-a-week sanitation collection service.

What will be the focus during Phase II of the program?

Any residents wishing to trade in their green 65-gallon garbage roll cart and upgrade to a green 95-gallon garbage roll cart can do so during Phase II. This upgrade requires a one-time \$15 cart fee and subscribing to the County's recycling program. Additionally, residents wishing to obtain an additional green 65-gallon garbage roll cart must not only subscribe to the recycling program and pay a one-time \$15 cart fee, but will also incur an increase in their sanitation assessment fees from \$265/year to \$350/year. Additionally, single-family households wishing to trade in their green 65-gallon garbage roll cart for a smaller green 35- or 45-gallon garbage roll cart can do so at no cost when carts are available.

When will carts be distributed?

Cart distribution will begin shortly after the completion of the door hanger notifications. This project will begin in June and last approximately six to eight weeks.

Can I continue using my current garbage containers once the program is fully implemented?

Once-a-week collection service begins on July 6, 2015. Roll cart delivery will begin in June and continue through the end of August. While awaiting a roll cart, even after the official July 6 one-day-a-week collection service start date, residents can continue placing their garbage at the curb in containers they currently use, until they receive their green 65-gallon roll cart. However, once the one-day-a-week collection service program is fully implemented by the end of August, all residents must use their county-provided roll carts for garbage disposal. Residents are also able to use durable, secure plastic bags for garbage disposal. Additionally, the Sanitation Division will not service residents using Herbie Curbie, Waste Management, Republic Services, Home Depot and other third party garbage containers. We have specifically evaluated the use of our roll carts with specialized collection vehicles, and these carts are authorized by the County and municipalities in which our customers live. **Therefore, once the program is fully implemented by the end of August 2015, garbage will not be collected in any other container or cart.**



What should I do with old and unwanted garbage containers?

As the program advances and is implemented, residents may have a need to discard old or unwanted garbage containers. Any unwanted plastic or metal containers may be placed at the curb with markings clearly indicating **“recycle.”** These containers will be collected by our Single-Stream recycling crew and processed with other recyclable materials. It is important that our collection crews are fully aware that these containers are no longer needed by the resident, and should be collected for recycling. This will eliminate instances of collection crews mistakenly removing containers that were not intended to be collected for recycling purposes. Additionally, unwanted garbage containers can be used for placement of yard trimmings and placed at the curb for collection.

What arrangements are in place for Pilot Program customers?

All Pilot Program customers will retain their current green garbage roll carts for garbage disposal use. However, some participants will experience a change in their current one-day-a-week pickup service, whereby they will have a different designated collection day once one-day-a-week service takes effect on July 6, 2015. Each Pilot Program customer's door hanger delivery will confirm the new designated collection day once countywide one-day-a-week pickup service takes effect.

What special garbage preparation and collection arrangements are in place for customers living in condominiums and townhomes?

Special arrangements regarding alternate garbage preparation and collection service procedures for residents of condominiums and townhomes are being reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Currently, we are working with condominium and townhome associations to deliver smaller roll carts, i.e., green 35- and 45-gallon garbage roll carts, as they become available, to residents at these locations who face larger cart storage space challenges.

What are my options if I don't want a county-provided garbage roll cart?

All residents are required to use county-provided garbage roll carts. However, residents, including those in condominiums and townhomes who are challenged for roll cart storage space can place their garbage in durable, secure plastic bags and placed curbside for collection. Additionally, customers with excess garbage that will not fit in the county-provided garbage roll cart can place their garbage in durable, secure plastic bags and placed curbside for collection.

Am I able to receive a smaller garbage roll cart?

Requests from single-family households for garbage roll cart sizes other than the standard 65-gallon roll cart will be handled on a case-by-case basis during Phase II of the program. The needs of condominium and townhome residents are being addressed during Phase I of the program. Please contact our Customer Service Division at 404.294.2900 for more information.

How will service change for residential customers?

Each residential customer will be issued a green 65-gallon garbage roll cart. Garbage, yard trimmings and recyclable materials will all be collected on the same day. Customers are responsible for placing their garbage containers curbside on their respective collection day and returning it to storage after collection. **Garbage placed in the cart must be in plastic bags and securely tied.** Carts must be placed in an easily accessible location at the curb.



What are the main roll cart and service change benefits?

- Carts are less likely to blow over or roll into the street.
- Carts minimize trash bags from being torn open by dogs or other animals.
- Carts are designed with wheels to improve ease of movement to the street.
- Neighborhoods will be more aesthetically pleasing due to the use of one type of garbage cart.
- Residents will no longer have to purchase containers or carts for their household garbage.
- Carts minimize litter being created from improperly prepared garbage or cans without a lid.
- Improved operational efficiencies due to a reduction in the number of collectors and vehicles needed to collect garbage.
- Reduced Sanitation Division employee injuries due to the automated process of tippers being used to lift carts and their contents.
- Same-day collection for solid waste, recyclable materials and yard trimmings will keep the streets neater, and eliminates confusion about the designated collection day.

What is semi-automated and fully automated garbage collection?

In semi-automated collection, garbage containers are emptied using a vehicle-mounted mechanical tipper. The collector retrieves the container from the location where the resident placed it at the curb, and walks it to the tipper with a mechanical device to lift and unload the container. A fully automated collection system uses a mechanical arm on a garbage truck. During collections, the driver operates the mechanical arm from the cab. A robotic arm retrieves the cart, unloads the contents, and returns the cart to its original location. Some neighborhoods and streets have parked vehicles obstructing access of the robotic arm, reducing the effectiveness of these vehicles. When the robotic arm cannot reach the cart, the driver of the truck is required to exit the cab to manually retrieve the cart.

How will the Sanitation Division's schedule of service work?

Residents will be given a green roll cart. On their designated collection day, residents must roll their carts to the curb by 7 a.m. The Sanitation Division will service the cart by sunset or nightfall on the scheduled collection day. Once the cart is emptied, residents should roll their carts back to their storage location. Residents should not leave roll carts on the street overnight.

What is a tipper?

A tipper is a mechanical lift operated by hydraulics, and used to empty the roll cart.

Who owns the garbage cart and what happens if it is damaged or stolen?

Carts are the property of DeKalb County's Sanitation Division, and are provided to customers free of charge. Each cart has a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) wafer, which identifies the household to which the cart was assigned. The Sanitation Division will repair any damaged lids, wheels or handles. If the cart is not repairable, it will be replaced. However, it is the responsibility of the customer to keep the inside of the cart clean and free of loose garbage.

Am I allowed to move my roll carts and bins if I am relocating?

Residents who relocate within the County are allowed to move their garbage roll carts and recycling bins or carts to their new location. However, residents should contact the Sanitation Division's customer service team



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to advise of their relocation plans at least two weeks in advance. If a customer relocates and will be leaving the roll carts or recycling bins at the old address, please also advise the Customer Service Division of your plans. Additionally, should residents require assistance with transporting the bins or roll carts to their new location, please contact the Customer Service Division at 404-294-2900 or sanitation@dekalbcountyga.gov.

Can the cart be used for other purposes?

No, your cart is assigned to your address for garbage collection only. The Sanitation Division will maintain location information to ensure that carts are in their assigned locations. Carts should not be used to move heavy objects.

What should I do if my new roll cart is inadequate to accommodate my garbage?

Those who participate in our curbside recycling program usually have ample space for weekly garbage collection. Recycling conserves landfill space and has many other benefits. Recyclable materials will be collected on the same day as garbage, but by a different collection vehicle. Clean recyclable papers, glass and plastic can be placed directly into the familiar blue bin or a new recycling roll cart that we expect to phase in during the latter part of 2015. To subscribe to our FREE Residential Curbside Recycling Program, please call our Customer Service Division at 404-294-2900 to have recyclable materials delivered to your home. Garbage should be bagged, securely tied and placed inside the cart. If the cart is inadequate to accommodate all garbage, excess bags of garbage should be placed next to the cart for collection. Placing excess bags of garbage on top of the cart may prevent the cart from being tipped/serviced.

Should I place my garbage in bags prior to placing in the roll cart? Yes. All garbage must be placed in bags and securely tied prior to being placed inside the cart. This will keep the cart cleaner, minimizes odors and insects, and prevents loose material from falling into the street.

Why does the lid on the cart need to be closed?

Lids should remain closed to keep animals and birds out of the cart, and prevent rain water from accumulating inside the cart.

Where should the cart be placed for collection?

The cart should be placed at the curb and out of traffic where it is clearly visible and accessible to collectors. The area immediately surrounding the cart should be unobstructed to ensure that a mechanical arm can lift the cart onto the truck. For easy collection, please do not place the container in contact with mailboxes, utility poles or parked cars.

What should I do with paper bags for recycling and yard trimmings each week?

Recyclable materials and yard trimmings will be collected on the same day using different vehicles. However, as you currently do, please continue to prepare recycling and yard trimmings separately. Simply place your yard trimmings and recyclable materials at the curb next to your green garbage roll cart. Yard debris must be bundled and tied, and placed in biodegradable bags or your old garbage bins for collection.



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Will the Sanitation Division still provide a bulky item and appliance pick up service?

Yes. A separate vehicle will be dispatched to collect appliances; other bulky items such as furniture, mattresses and televisions will continue to be collected with household garbage. Please contact our Customer Service Division at 404-294-2900 for information on what items are acceptable and to arrange a pick up. Additionally, information on special collection service is contained in the Collection Procedures brochure, which can also be accessed by visiting www.dekalbsanitation.com, www.rollingforwardtoone.com, or www.dekalbcountyga.gov.

Will sanitation collection service fees for residential customers increase?

No. Residents' sanitation fees will remain the same, just as they have since 2006.

How can the elderly or disabled get their carts to the street if they live on a hill or have a physical disability?

"Back-door" collection service will be available for disabled or elderly customers, whereby collection service team members will retrieve garbage containers from qualified residents' roll cart storage areas. A predetermination will need to be made and approved in order to activate "back-door" collection service. Please contact our Customer Service Division at 404-294-2900 or sanitation@dekalbcountyga.gov for more information.

Will customers incur a cost associated with garbage roll cart use?

All customers will receive a standard 65-gallon garbage roll cart. Customers wishing to trade in their green 65-gallon garbage roll cart for a 35- or 45-gallon garbage roll cart can do so at no fee during Phase II. However, customers wishing to trade in their 65-gallon garbage roll cart for a 95-gallon garbage roll cart will incur a one-time \$15 upgrade fee. Additionally, any residents wishing to receive a second green garbage roll cart can do so during Phase II for a one-time \$15 fee, must subscribe to the County's recycling program, and will also incur an increase in sanitation assessment fees from \$265/year to \$350/year.

Does the County have plans to advance its recycling efforts and program?

Yes. Currently, the Sanitation Division is focusing on the delivery of green 65-gallon garbage roll carts to residents, with a projected completion date of the end of August 2015. Subsequently, the Sanitation Division will focus on advancing its recycling efforts and program, and officially introduce blue 65-gallon recycling roll carts during Phase II. The division will collaborate with the County's Recreation, Parks & Cultural Affairs Department to increase recycling efforts at various locations throughout the County, including addressing recycling needs in the County's parks.

What are the costs associated with recycling roll carts and bins?

Any customers wishing to trade in their 18-gallon complimentary recycling bin for a blue 65-gallon recycling roll cart will incur a one-time \$15 upgrade fee. Returned 18-gallon recycling bins will be used for the DeKalb County School District's recycling program, and placed in classrooms throughout the County. Please contact the Sanitation Division's customer service team at 404-294-2900 or sanitation@dekalbcountyga.gov to arrange for recycling bin trade-in or return requests, or with any inquiries regarding the recycling program.

How will this change affect Sanitation Division employees?

Handloading garbage is hard work and a repetitive, high-labor task. The Sanitation Division's current collection



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methods require collectors to pick up, on average, two 32-gallon containers or bags of garbage each day from 1,000 residential households. The collector must completely pickup and place the heavy garbage into the hopper. Garbage containers and bags often contain hidden sharp objects; insects are attracted to garbage as a potential food source; and wet surfaces can cause a collector to slip or fall, with all these circumstances placing our employees in situations where they can be hurt. Carts and the use of semi-automated or fully automated collection trucks will significantly reduce exposure to these risks. Preventing workplace injuries keeps employees on the job, and will allow us to continue providing reasonably priced waste collection services to our customers.

Will this change in service require layoffs?

No. All Sanitation Division employees will keep their jobs. However, some job duties may change to reflect other needs within the division. In addition to collecting materials from our commercial and residential customers, the division maintains mowing the sides of county and state roadways, coordinates cleanups of illegal dumping sites, maintains natural areas, and participates in some stream restoration projects. Any reduction in the number of collectors or drivers will be redirected to other efforts that promote beautification throughout the County.

How can I seek clarification on any issue pertaining to the sanitation collection service change?

Our customer service team is delighted to answer any questions or address any concerns you may have. Please contact our Customer Service Division at 404-294-2900 or sanitation@dekalbcountyga.gov for more information. Additionally, information on the sanitation collection service change can be found by visiting www.rollingforwardtoone.com, www.dekalbsanitation.com, or www.dekalbcountyga.gov.